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A method and apparatus for a node on a network to transmit identifying information about itself, typically in the course of an audit of the hardware and/or software that are present on the network. The method involves the node transmitting both a current node identifier value and a former node identifier value, each typically a network interface card (NIC) address. The former node identifier value permits the receiver of the transmission to determine which node is involved even if the current node identifier has been changed since the previous audit (e.g., because of a change of NICs). The current and former node identifier values may be stored in a timestamped hidden file, e.g., an .INI-type file. Such file may be redundantly stored on multiple partitions, with the timestamp used to determine which is the most recently updated file.

SECRET